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Message Text

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PAGE 01 KUALA 02349 220610Z
ACTION HA-02

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 DODE-00 SY-02 CA-01
CIAE-00 INR-05 IO-06 L-01 USIE-00 PA-01 NSCE-00
INRE-00 SSO-00 /039 W
----------079801 220618Z /16
O P 220530Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3054
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 2349

LIMDIS

HONG KONG PASS TO INS/DIDIR FELDMAN

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF
SUBJECT: INDOCHINESE REFUGEE VESSELS ALLEGEDLY SEIZED BY FORCE

1. IN EARLY MARCH, REFUGEE AFFAIRS PERSONNEL ENCOUNTERED REFUGEES FROM FIVE VESSELS ALLEGEDLY SEIZED BY FORCE IN VIETNAMESE WATERS AND BROUGHT TO MALAYSIA. CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH CASE VARY AND ARE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO VERIFY, PARTICULARLY REGARDING DEGREE OF COERCION AND ACTUAL ORIGINAL INTENTIONS OF PASSENGERS INVOLVED. WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF ACTUAL INJURIES OR DEATHS RESULTING FROM SUCH SEIZURES.

2. THOUGH SOME ARMED REFUGEES AND PERSONS ALLEGED TO BE SRV CADRE WERE REPORTEDLY TAKEN INTO POLICE CUSTODY, GOM HAS ALLOWED APPROXIMATELY 300 OF REFUGEES FROM INVOLVED BOATS TO LAND. IN THE CAMPS, AUTHORITIES TREAT THEM NO DIFFERENTLY THAN REFUGEES WHO HAVE ARRIVED BY MORE CONVENTIONAL MEANS.

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3. UNHCR HAS TAKEN NO OFFICIAL NOTICE OF REFUGEES FROM VESSELS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN SEIZED BY FORCE. UNHCR REPRESENTATIVES AT PULAU BESAR DID NOT MENTION TO U.S. INTERVIEWERS CONDITIONS OF REFUGEES' ARRIVAL AND SEEMED ANXIOUS FOR U.S. TO BEGIN ACCEPTING CONCERNED REFUGEES WIHOUT DIFFERENTIATION BETWEEN THEM AND ROUTINE ARRIVALS.

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4. WE HAVE WAITED TO INTERVIEW SOME 313 REFUGEES FROM THESE VESSELS UNTIL WE COULD GAUGE GOM AND UNHCR REACTION. WE PLAN TO RESUME INS INTERVIEWS OF BOAT CAMP REFUGEES AFTER FIRST WEEK OF APRIL. UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED, WE INTEND TO INTERVIEW LANDED REFUGEES FROM SUBJECT VESSELS WITHOUT DIFFERENTIATION AND TO PRESENT TO INS THOSE WHO WISH TO GO TO U.S. AND APPEAR ELIGIBLE UNDER CURRENT CRITERIA.

5. THOSE WHO WISH TO RETURN TO VIETNAM ARE APPARENTLY BEING HELD AT PRESENT BY GOM AUTHORITIES. NO ACTION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN TO RETURN THEM, AS FAR AS WE CAN DETERMINE. WE SUSPECT NEITHER THE GOM NOR THE UNHCR ARE EAGER TO TACKLE WHAT IS OBVIOUSLY A VERY SENSITVE PROBLEM FOR ALL CONCERNED.
MILLER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: REFUGEES, SHIP DETENTION, SEA RESCUES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
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TAGS: SREF, VM, MY
To: STATE
Type: TE
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